EVERY OTHER SUNDAY.

A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND THE HOME.

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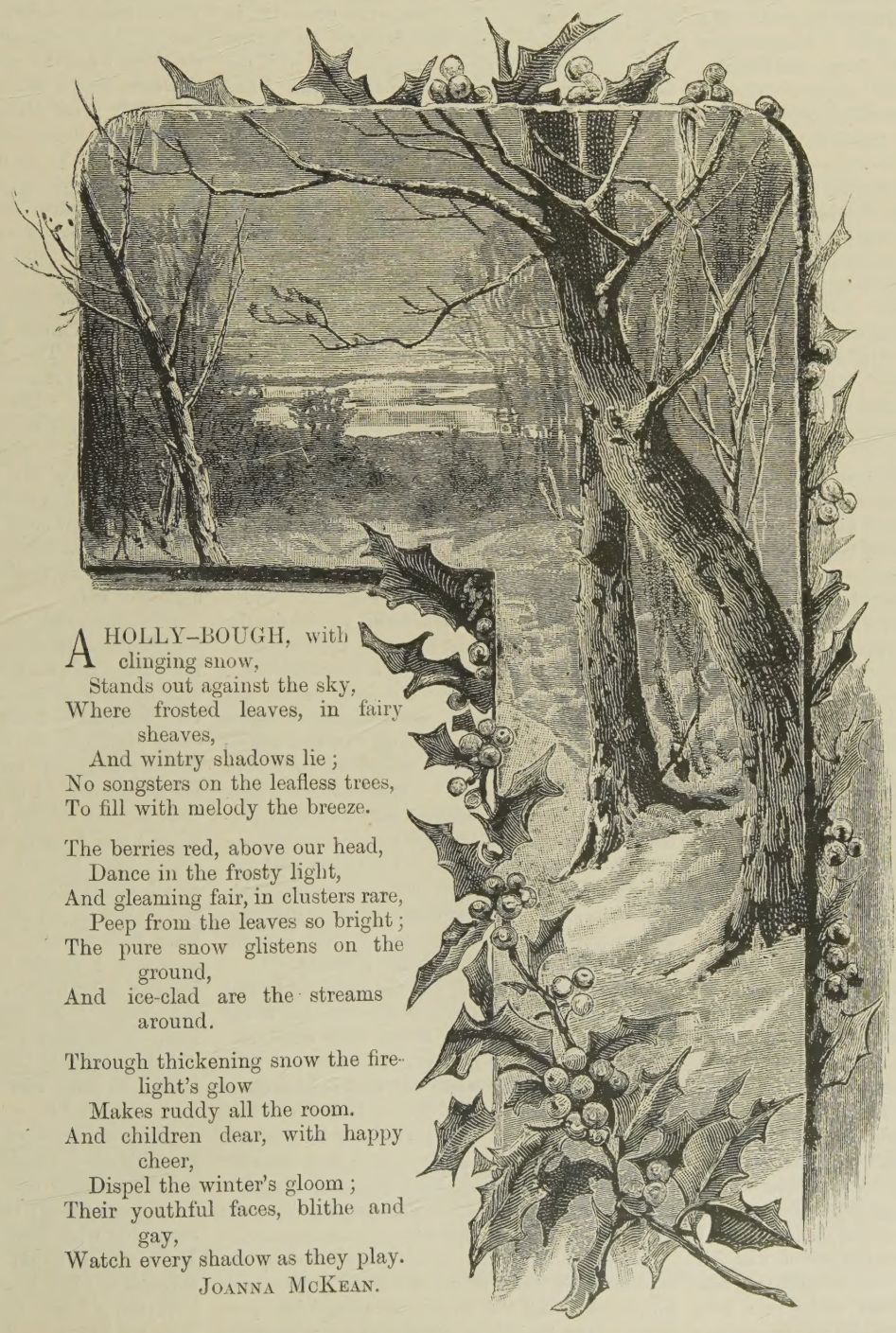

A HOLLY-BOUGH, with clinging snow,
Stands out against the sky,
Where frosted leaves, in fairy sheaves,
And wintry shadows lie;
No songsters on the leafless trees,
To fill with melody the breeze.

The berries red, above our head,
Dance in the frosty light,
And gleaming fair, in clusters rare,
Peep from the leaves so bright;
The pure snow glistens on the ground,
And ice-clad are the streams around.

Through thickening snow the fire-light's glow
Makes ruddy all the room.
And children dear, with happy cheer,
Dispel the winter's gloom;
Their youthful faces, blithe and gay,
Watch every shadow as they play.

JOANNA MCKEAN.

MY COUNTRY WEEK.

BY M. R. F. G.

AM ten years old; my name is Mary Rose; I live in Boston with my mother, my sister Katy, and my brother Tom. Oh, I forgot about the new baby! She has no name, and was born after my father died.

My father used to be a painter, and then we were rich, — no, I mean quite well off. He made a good deal of money, and we lived in a house with only two families. But one day last October — I think it was October, for I had just begun school — he was brought home by two policemen and a doctor and put to bed. He was sick two or three months, and we had no money, and had to give up two of our rooms. Then one day he died, and the room was all cleared, and a man they called the "undertaker" brought some black curtains and several silver candlesticks. The priest came, and we had a supper with ever so many people, and a beautiful drive to Mt. Hope Cemetery; and after that I never saw my father again.

The next week we moved into a great tenement house where quantities of other people live. Oh, how tired I was before I got upstairs! The windows of our room — we only have one now — look out on a dirty court filled with ash-barrels, broken bottles, and tin cans. The halls are so dark that we have to grope our way upstairs. We live on the fifth story. In summer it is hot and stifling, and oh, so noisy! People are stumbling up the broken-down stairs all night; babies are screaming, men and women are scolding each other all night.

My mother sleeps in one bed with the baby and Tommy; I sleep on a sofa with Katy. We have no sink in our room, and have to wash ourselves in the sink in the lower hall. Sometimes I have to wait an hour because so many people are there before me. In our room there is a cooking-stove, a table, and two or three chairs. I cut out some prints from a picture-paper and tacked them on the wall, and the priest gave me two colored pictures of the Holy Virgin. In winter there are so many in the room, and it is so small, that we manage to keep warm. Last year the city allowed us two dollars a month for coal and groceries. But in summer all sorts of bad smells come in our windows, and the air of the room is like an oven.

My mother goes out washing and scrubbing every morning at seven o'clock; she leaves me with baby and the other children. Generally I find the stairs the coolest place in summer, and sit on them holding baby often for hours. Mother puts the teapot on the stove before she goes to work. There is bread usually in the closet. Sundays and holidays we have meat; but a salt mackerel is our dinner common days, and once in a while we have baked apples for supper, when mother makes a few cents extra.

One day I was holding baby on the stairs. I think we both must have gone to sleep, for some one tried to go upstairs and tumbled over us. I was frightened, and woke up expecting a scolding for being in the way; but as soon as I could see anything I saw that the person who fell over us was not like any of the neighbors. She was much better dressed, and spoke in a low, sweet voice. She did not scold me, but asked me about mother and the children, and I took her into our room. She said I looked pale and sickly, and asked me if I would like to go away for a week in the country. I said I had to "mind" the children. But she took my name down, and said she should come to see mother.

The next evening she came again, and saw my mother. She asked her about the rent, and how much she earned, and said she thought I looked pale and ought to be sent on the "country week."

My mother had never heard about it. So the lady told us both that some kind people had arranged a plan for taking city children out into the country where they could see the birds and flowers and green grass. Of course mother said she could not let me go unless some one could be found to take care of the "young ones." The lady, however, took them herself to a "day nursery" on Blossom Street. I believe the children have their dinner there and are taken care of all day for a few cents.

All this happened in June. It was arranged that I should go to the country the first week in July. The lady came and brought me a neat dress and had my shoes mended, and with my ticket of invitation gave me a night-gown. I had never had a night-gown before, and we had only one tooth-brush for the family. She told me to be at the railroad station in Boston (the Lowell Station, I think) at seven o'clock on Tuesday morning, July 5th. There I met Miss Bailey, and started, with thirty other children, for Warner, N. H.

It was a pretty warm day, and we were two hours in the cars. I had on my clean pink and white gingham dress and a black straw hat trimmed with green ribbon. My hat was three years old and shabby; my new night-gown, the family tooth-brush, and my old brown calico were tied up in a neat bundle which I carried. Some of the children were dressed much better than I was. One had a valise *full* of clothes; one girl had a doll with her which had real flaxen hair. A lady travelled in the car with us to take care of us; and as some of the boys tried to get off the car at every station, I guess she had a hard time.

At last we heard the conductor cry out, "Next station Warner;" and then we all rushed for the door. The lady told us, however, that we must wait until the train stopped, and that then some one would come for us. As soon as we got into the station we could see a crowd of ladies waiting on the platform. I began to feel a little afraid then, and wished I were at home. My ticket said "Mrs. Smith." Once I knew a Mrs. Smith who beat her children, and I thought perhaps this one might be like her. A gentleman came into the car and said, "Let all the children get out and stand together on the left-hand side of the station." I found that afterwards the gentleman was a minister; but he was not like our priests, and seemed young and pleasant.

Out we all scampered, and the minister looked at our tickets, and called one after another of the ladies who were waiting to get their children.

Presently, such a pretty young lady in a blue cambric dress with a white hat with daisies came up to me and said, "Are you *my* little girl?" I loved her at once. She carried my bundle and took me outside the station, and then another nice lady was waiting who she said was her mother, Mrs. Smith (she was nothing like the Mrs. Smith I knew before).

We drove and drove up a high hill and by the side of fields white with daisies and yellow with buttercups. All the houses we passed had gardens. Mrs. Smith's house was white, with green blinds, and a little vine ran all over the front door. There were beds of red geraniums and several rose-bushes in her garden. The first question I asked was how much rent she paid. I said my mother paid two dollars a week. Mrs. Smith said that she did not pay any rent, for she owned her house.

Her daughter took me upstairs and put me into a pretty little room with a pink and white paper, and this room I had all to myself. There was no stove in it, only a little bed covered with a white spread, a bureau and a washstand, and a rocking-chair. Mrs. Smith said the bureau was for my clothes. I think she was surprised that I did not bring more things with me, for she said, "My child, you have not brought any clean underclothes!" You see, the truth was I had only two sets, and the others were full of holes and not worth bringing.

It was about eleven o'clock when we arrived. Mrs. Smith washed my face and hands and took me into the garden, and then we all had dinner. There was a parlor, dining-room, and kitchen, besides a bedroom on the first floor. In the family there were the mother and three daughters. She told me to call the young ladies Miss Nelly, Miss Lily, and Miss Kate. They took turns cooking and doing the housework, and everything in the house was as neat as wax. We had flowers on the table at every meal. At dinner we had meat, potatoes, beans, and corn, and pudding. Mrs. Smith gave me a drink of milk whenever I asked for one, and let me pick flowers in the garden.

Almost every day some pleasant excursion or picnic was planned for the children who came from Boston. The minister drove round after the children in something called "a barge." It looked like the "Black Maria;" and we all took our dinner with us when we went off into the woods, and ate it under the trees. The days I stayed at home for dinner Mrs. Smith let me choose my own dessert. One gentleman I met on the street asked me if I were one of the little ones who came from Boston, and when I said "Yes," told me to come to his shop and he would give me a glass of soda.

Mrs. Smith used to sew for me all the morning. She gathered together some of her neighbors and they made me two new sets of underclothes. She taught me how to darn and hem. It was not very pleasant to sit in the house and sew an hour every day, but she told me I should be able to help my mother so much more if I learned how to use my needle. I have learned how to make my bed, too, and can set the table very nicely. Once, when I was helping wash the dishes, I dropped a tea-cup and broke it in pieces. I expected Mrs. Smith would beat me and send me home, but she only said in a gentle voice, "My dear, you must learn to be careful." Then she said she hoped sometime I should be able to get a place in the country to help some lady do her housework; but she added, "No one will want you unless you learn to be neat and careful."

I should like to live in the country; I should be willing to wash and scrub all day if I could live with Mrs. Smith.

Our ten days were ended too soon. I told my kind friends I should like to stay with them always. I heard one lady say, "Those children are being spoiled; they will be miserable and discontented when they go home." But I was not. My good time did me good, and helped me through the hot August days. I told my mother everything I did, and all about the people who were kind to me. The neighbors heard all about it, too. Mrs. Smith gave me a basket full of

daisies to give to the other children in the tenement house. You should have heard the laughing and screaming that went on in the court-yard when the children saw me with the flowers. I think more than a hundred women and children gathered around me begging for some of my daisies.

My mother said I looked quite brown and fat for my "country week." I know the children I met in town looked more white and sickly to me than they ever did before. Our room looked dirty and small at first, and I longed for the freedom of the fields and the sweetness of the flowers the first few days after I got home. But I was glad to see my mother and baby, and I have never once wished that I had not been away from this narrow court and seen something of God's beautiful world. I only wish all the wretched, puny little children in this tenement could have been away too.

O you rich boys and girls who live in pleasant, happy homes, and spend long, beautiful summers in the country! I want you to know about *my* happy country week. Then perhaps next year you will persuade your mother to give some other poor little city girl as good a time as my dear Mrs. Smith gave me.

TOT'S SERVING.

BY MRS. ANNIE D. DARLING.

THANKSGIVING-DAY was a snowy one in our town, last year, and the ponds were frozen over, though not with ice thick enough to make skating safe. The wind bit at all the poor little fingers and toes that were not snugly cased in good warm mittens and strong shoes, and the poor had an early foretaste of the discomfort of winter. The cold, harsh wind without made the piled logs blaze freely that were heaped on the hearth, and the roar of the dancing flames only made the cheerful comfort within doors the more enjoyable.

Who can picture the delights of a Thanksgiving dinner to the children? It is not like the long-anticipated joy of Christmas-tide, but a different pleasure. The meeting of friends, the delicious viands prepared for the table that take a more prominent place on that day than on other holidays, the generous overflowing of grateful hearts that cannot sit down to their own well-spread board till assured that others are likewise blest with unusual supplies, — all these pleasant excitements crown the good old Thanksgiving-Day with a halo of joy to the young.

The dinner was over at Mr. Holt's, and the party sat around the fire in the parlor, when Ellen, the eldest daughter, whispered in her mother's ear, "Do you suppose Tot is all right, mamma? She ate no dinner, and I have not seen her since."

"Why, Ellen, I hope so. I was so busy I did not see what was going on at the children's table, knowing that Aunt Jane would look after them. Go hunt her up, and let me know if she is sick. Uncle Edward leaves at six, and then we shall be more at leisure."

Ellen began her search for the missing one, but the only result was she discovered that the little red hood and warm coat were also missing; but where the child could have gone, and without her dinner, on that day of days, was a mystery.

While Ellen was counting the many pairs of rubbers kept in the entry closet, to see if there was one pair less than the number of little feet in the house, the door opened softly, and in stole Tot, as she was called, — a veritable little Red Riding-Hood, basket in hand, with cheeks rosy red, matching the red hood, mittens, and scarf tied about her neck.

"Oh, sister Ellen, I must tell you and mamma, for I feel so bad in here about it," putting her hand on her heart as she spoke, "I can't bear it!" and a choked sob told how heavy the burden was.

"What is it, dear, and where have you been? I have been looking everywhere for you. Tell sister all about it;" and she was hugged close to a sympathizing breast.

"Why, Ellen, yesterday I found a poor cat that Ed said the boys down street had been chasing, — and I guess she was hurted somewhere, — behind the old barn way out beyond the orchard, you know. And I asked cook to give me some meat for her, and some milk; but she was so busy she could n't. And Mary said the cat would find enough to eat, — cats always did; and the pantry-door was locked, and I could n't find anything for her. I knew she was just starving, and nobody ought to starve Thanksgiving-Day, ought they, Ellen? And so — " The little stream of talk had rushed on like a meadow-brook in springtime, so earnest was the speaker; but now she lowered her voice and played with her sister's watch-chain, in an embarrassment that told deeper feelings were stirred. "I 'membered last Sunday Miss Allen was telling how we children could make gifts unto the Lord, — and that was what the lesson was about, — and she said we should give things to Him that cost us something; not money, — she did n't mean that, — but do something we did n't want to, maybe, and He would know and be glad. And then I thought I 'd save my dinner for that poor kitty. But don't you think, Ellen, she did n't like the cranberry sauce nor the nice celery, and Aunt Jane gave me a splendid piece; but she ate the turkey all up, every bit, and the mince pie. And you don't know how funny she looked eating the ice-cream! It got on her whiskers, and she shook her head to get it off. And Ellen, will God care 'cause I told you? You know it says, 'Let not your right hand know what the left does.' Does that mean I must n't tell you or mamma? I did n't mean to. But just as I got ready to come back, it was so cold, when I turned round there was a poor man picking a bone the kitty left from her dinner, as if he was so hungry! I felt so bad for him I told him to come home with me and he might have my supper, though I 'm awful hungry, and he is out in the stable now. Won't you ask Bridget to give him something, please?"

And so when mamma heard the story, glad to find so true a witness of the Spirit's work in her little daughter's heart, she called the poor wayfarer to the kitchen fire, and made him comfortable

Tot enjoyed her supper rather more than did the little cousins who came to the table with surfeited appetites, and she went to sleep happy to know that the poor hunted cat was snug and warm in a box of straw in the big barn. And a lesson in self-denial was graven deeply on other hearts than little Tot's that day.

IF thou wouldst walk in light,
Make other spirits bright;
Who, seeking for himself alone, ever entered heaven?
In blessings we are blest,
In labor find our rest;
If we bend not to the world's work, heart and hand and brain,
We have lived our life in vain.

C. Seymour.

History and Biography.

THE AUTHOR OF "NEARER, MY GOD, TO THEE."

From the Second Part of "Quarterly Lessons on Forty Hymns," just published by the Unitarian Sunday-School Society.

"NEARER, my God, to Thee," written by the Unitarian, Mrs. Sarah Fuller Adams, is sung more widely to-day than any other English hymn. Sarah Fuller Flower was the daughter of Benjamin Flower, a distinguished journalist of Cambridge, England. She was born at Harlow, Feb. 22, 1805. Her mother was a highly-gifted woman, and Sarah showed at an early age a remarkable taste for literature as well as unusual talents for composition. At the age of twenty-nine she was married to William Bridges Adams, "a man of scientific and literary attainments, extensively known as a civil engineer, and with some repute as a writer." Mrs. Adams inherited a delicate constitution from her mother, who died of consumption while Sarah was a child. An older sister, Eliza, suffered for many years from the same fatal disease. Between these sisters a close intimacy was formed. Eliza was a musician, and composed many tunes for the hymns which Sarah wrote. She died in 1846, and two years later Mrs. Adams, whose devotion to her invalid sister had impaired her own health, passed away, — Aug. 14, 1848, — "almost her last breath bursting into unconscious song as the gentle spirit glided from its beautiful frame."

Although Mrs. Adams will be best remembered as the writer of the hymn which is inseparably connected with her name, she acquired no little fame as the author of a dramatic poem on the martyrdom of "Vivia Perpetua," the contributor of several hymns to Fox's "Hymns and Anthems," and the compiler of a catechism, entitled "The Flock at the Fountain."

Her hymn, "Nearer, my God, to Thee," expresses the trust which sustained her own soul in the trials through which she was called to pass. The "cross" that raised her into the nearer presence of her God was the sadness of seeing her beloved sister waste slowly away when no human power could stay the progress of the insidious disease. It is because we all have at one time or another to bear some cross of grief or pain that this beautiful hymn voices our longing and our hope. Only a narrow mind and an ungenerous heart can criticise the hymn as having nothing of Christ in it; as if the use of the name of Christ rather than the possession of his spirit marked the true Christian.

The Biblical imagery of verses 2–4, while faithful to the story of the Hebrew patriarch, is here lifted into emblems of the pilgrim's progress of each tried and suffering child of God. In the jubilant strains of the closing stanza we are reminded of the great prophet's immortal words of cheer and comfort: "They that wait upon the Lord . . . shall mount up with wings as eagles."

The following stanza from one of the hymns in "Vivia Perpetua" gives another phase of Mrs. Adams's religious faith: —

"Part in peace! Christ's life was peace;
Let us live our lives in him.
Part in peace! Christ's death was peace;
Let us die our death in him.
Part in peace! Christ promise gave
Of a life beyond the grave,
Where all mortal partings cease:
Brethren, sisters, part in peace!"

Our Letter-Box.

WHO can tell us the story of the "lovely narcissus," which is alluded to in the little verse printed complete in this number? Cannot you, Master McMurdie? When you send us the enigma you promise us, please enclose with it a short account of the fair youth. It will be interesting to all our readers. We are glad you were so successful with the enigmas.

EDITOR OF EVERY OTHER SUNDAY:

DEAR SIR, — I have found the answer to Enigma No V. all alone, and with Mama's help found the answer to the New Testament Enigma. The answer to Enigma No. V the "virtue we are all trying to practice as well as preach" is Temperance. The answer to New Testament Enigma, the "request made to Jesus by his disciples James and John," is "Grant unto us that we may sit one on thy right hand and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory." Sometime I will send you an Enigma with an answer.

Yours Truly,

GEO. E. MCMURDIE.

CROSS AND SQUARE, No. 2.

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* * * * *

Square. — *Upper line:* Ruth's mother-in-law. *Left line:* the seventh of the Minor Prophets; his book prophesies the fall of Nineveh. *Lower line:* what the wise men and sorcerers practised before Pharaoh and Moses. *Right line:* the son born to Abraham in his hundredth year.

Cross. — *Horizontal:* the first of the Minor Prophets, who lived during the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah. *Perpendicular, reading upwards:* the relish of anything

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN No. V.

Conundrums: 1. When he turns over a new leaf.
2. Because it is re-covered.
3. F, for it will make *it, fit.*
4. Colonels (kernels).
5. William Black (Will, I am black).
6. Buttercups.
7. When it is (s) low.
8. This rock is nice (gneiss).

The Verse Completed.

COME, dear, let me show you a silvery *fountain;*
'T is deep in the grove at the foot of the *mountain;*
While others the size of their baskets are *heaping*
With wild-flowers and columbines, we 'll not be *sleeping;*
But we 'll speed through the grove, my dear little daughter,
And gather pale flowerets that droop o'er the *water.*
And when we reach home, and our wreaths we are twining,
I 'll tell the old tale of a youth's sad *repining,*
And how he was changed to the *lovely Narcissus.*
But now we must haste, lest our party should *miss us.*

Acrostic 1:

Cana.		
Antioch.		
Philadelphia		
Emmaus.		
Rhodes.		Capernaum.
Nain.		
Ararat.		
Ur.		
Moab.		

Enigma VI: Nebuchadnezzar.

Diamond Word-Puzzle:

A
E B B
E V I C T
A B I G A I L
B R A C E
T I E
L

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS.

11. From the Philistines; Palestine and Philistia are synonymous words.
12. In the southwestern part of the land of Canaan.
13. From Egypt, along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, nearly to the seaport town of Joppa (now Jaffa), extending probably not very far inland.
14. Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron.
15. In the time of the Patriarchs they were a pastoral people; later they became a commercial people and were very prosperous.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

16. What was the cause of the enmity between the Israelites and the Philistines?
17. Did the Israelites ever succeed in driving the Philistines out of the land of Canaan?
18. What made the commercial prosperity of Philistia?
19. What is known of the religion of this people?
20. What is known about their gods?

For Youngest Readers.

"AUNT JANE."

BY CARO A. DUGAN.

IS not that a strange name for a horse? It is really a title of honor, and I will tell you how it was earned.

When our good horse first came to us, she was young and gay, as full of play as a child, and we called her Jennie. As time went on, she grew quiet, steady, and was so faithful and obedient that we all loved her. "Jennie" seemed too light and frivolous a name then for a horse of such good qualities, and we began to call her Jane.

She was large and strong, reddish-brown in color, with soft, intelligent eyes, and dark mane and tail. She was a good carriage-horse, obedient to the least touch of rein or inflection of voice, and so gentle that she was the best possible playfellow for our youngest, a child of ten years, who was never happier than when in company with Jane.

Little Emily was not long in learning to harness after she once made Jane's acquaintance; and the great horse would bend her head down meekly while the child, mounting a chair, succeeded after great effort in putting on the bridle. Again, Jane would stand with quiet patience while her little mistress tried to curry her, combed out her long mane and tail, patted and hugged her, ran under and about her, or climbed up for a ride on her broad back. I think the good Jane really deserved to be called "aunt" then, for the patience and tenderness she manifested toward this little child. But the title was not given till later.

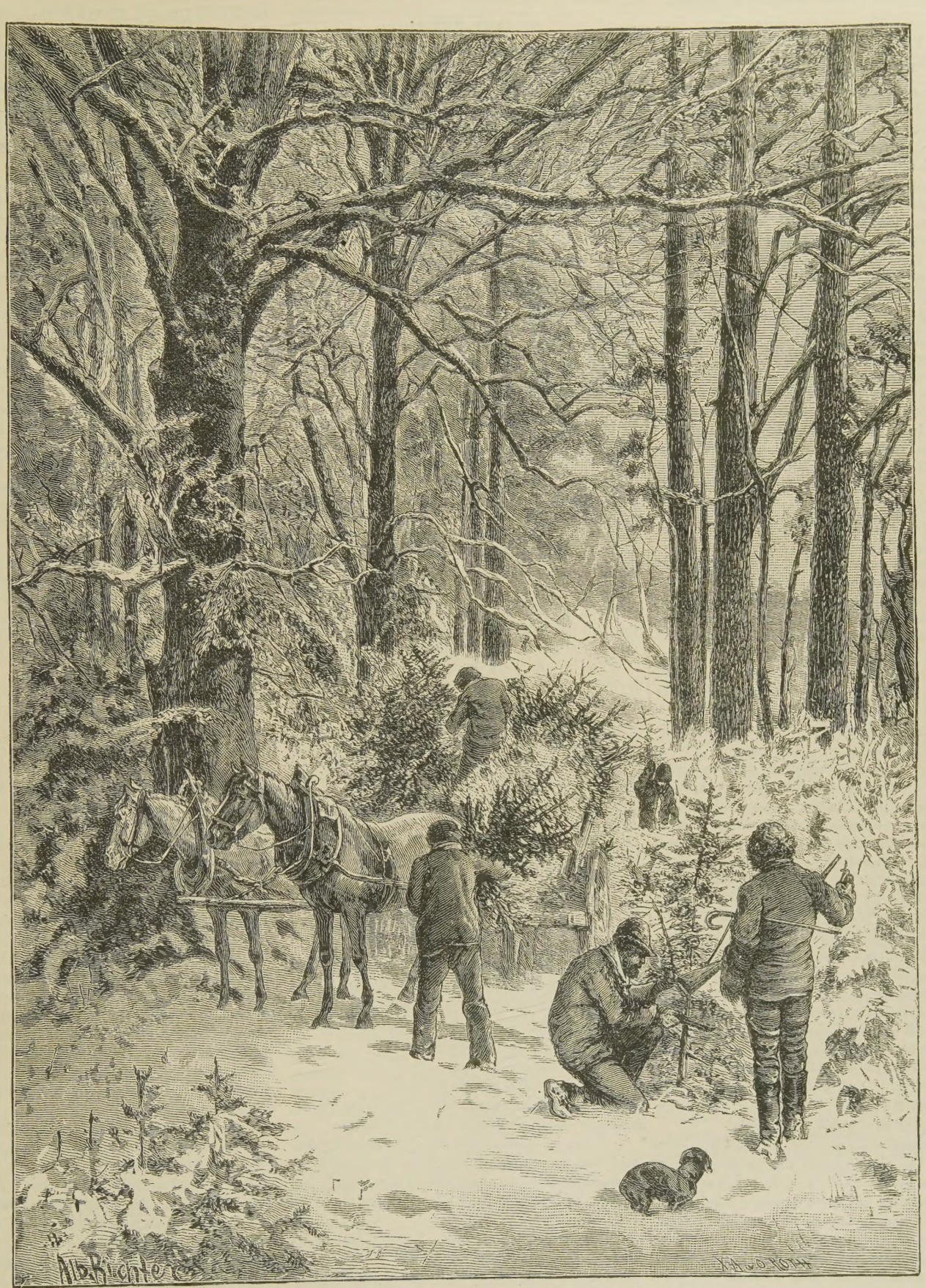
One fair spring day we went for a long drive in the woods. It was so mild and lovely under the oaks and pines, and we found such treasures in the way of pale anemones, arbutus, rosy and sweet, hidden away under the leaves, and young ferns just unrolling their woolly wrappings, that we lingered and lingered, and were tempted to explore some grassy, unused wood roads that looked especially inviting. In so doing we lost our way; and before we could again find the open county road the sun had set.

Jane started off for home at a good pace; but it was distant several miles, and the darkness gathered fast. It was a cloudy, starless evening. Soon we could not see distinctly even the horse's length in front of us; but we knew Jane could be trusted, so we gave her a loose rein and let her take her own way. She was trotting briskly along a quiet lane, when suddenly she stopped. We could see no approaching team or any obstacle in the way, so bade Jane go on. To our astonishment the horse, for the first time in all our experience of her, refused to obey. She paid no attention to rein or voice, and only tossed her head a little at the unwelcome touch of the whip. We could see that she kept turning her head and looking back at us in a gentle, wistful way. Clearly something was wrong. The driver threw down the reins, and springing from the carriage, walked up to the horse's head. Then the mystery was explained.

A few paces in front of Jane, seated right in the wheel-rut, was a little child, — a curly-haired, blue-eyed baby of two years. He was patting the earth with one little hand, and looking up in a sweet, wondering way at the great horse, looming above him through the dusk. He was not directly in the horse's path; Jane could have passed him easily enough. How could she know that the swift-turning wheels behind her, which she herself could not see, would reach and harm the child?

Our good Jane! How glad we were of the disobedience that had troubled us so much a moment before! How we stroked and petted and praised her, even before we lifted the pretty baby from his perilous position and carried him to the nearest house, with injunctions to the young Irish mother, who had many children about her, to take better care of her youngest!

At the first exclamation of surprise and relief when the baby was found, our active little Emily, who was driving with us, stepped out on the shaft, walked along it, and mounted the horse's back, in her eager desire to see. When the real state of affairs was revealed to her, and looking down into the trusting baby face she saw how much we owed our gentle, intelligent horse, the little maiden threw her arms around Jane's neck, nestled her rosy little face in the flowing mane, and exclaimed, "You dear, good Aunt Jane!" And "Aunt Jane" she was called after that to the end of her life. Do you not think she fairly won the name?



CUTTING THE CHRISTMAS-TREES.

Open Leaves from Nature's Book.

THE SNAKE-SKIN.

BY KATHERINE HAGAR.

We were spending the summer at a farm-house near Lake Dunmore. One pleasant morning half a dozen ladies and children rowed in their small boats over the tranquil water to a point called "The Rocks." The children built a fire and tried to cook some blueberries that they had found on stunted bushes growing there. The ladies amused themselves, some with books and sketching, others with the view of the lovely lake. The effect of the blue sky, and bluer water surrounded by soft-hued hills, charmed them; and they tried to fix in their minds the quiet scene.

But Charley, climbing about among the rocks, interrupted the rest of the party by announcing his treasure-trove, a snake-skin. He thought that he had found a remnant of civilized life, — a cast-off ruche, or a lady's ruffle or collar; for to his uneducated boy mind it looked like something of the kind in its remarkable transparency.

It lies before me now, nearly a yard in length, in color a dirty white, the upper side reminding me of honey-comb or lace work, the under with thicker ridges appearing regularly every eighth of an inch apart, making a scale-like fold, and the rest as transparent as mica.

Before the poor snake cast it off, this waste skin stuck to his eyeballs so as to render him partially blind, making him unusually irritable. He had not been able to eat during the period of casting his skin; but then he has the habit of taking long fasts, so he did not mind it very much. The skin splits away from the margin of his mouth and he glides off, leaving this old coat turned inside out, but in perfect condition.

During the long, cold winter of our northern climates the snake lives in a deep sleep, for he is sensitive to cold; but in the spring he rouses himself, moves his flexible, undulating, narrow body, creeping, springing, climbing, constricting, burrowing, perhaps swimming. I cannot say that he opens his eyes, for they are without lids and are always open. The hearing of snakes is dull, "like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears;" but they really have no external organs of hearing, no ears visible. This snake, whose skin Charley found, had his jaws furnished with sharp teeth, though he had no poisonous fangs. But for all the teeth, we know that serpents do not chew their food, but whatever they eat they swallow whole. Some snakes swallow animals much larger than themselves. If you see one in New England with a portion of his body distended to about the size of a man's fist, you may be sure that he has caught, lubricated, and swallowed alive a frog, toad, or even a chicken, and is now employing all his energies in digesting his food.

Mr. Thompson tells us that he has often been startled by the piercing and mournful cry of a frog, and on going to the spot, he has seen "the poor sufferer with his hind quarters ingulfed in the throat of the snake, vainly struggling with his fore feet to extricate himself and at the same time uttering a most piteous moan." This writer's sympathies seem to have been with the frog, for he concludes with the information that he usually destroyed "the cruel aggressor" and then the frog would hop off as lively as ever. But many of the snakes in New England are useful in their way, as their food consists principally of insects. Nevertheless, harmless as they are, their stealthy, creeping movements have given them a reputation for cunning, deception, and ugliness.

COUSIN RUTH.

BY LUCY WHEELOCK.

"All service ranks the same with God:
If now, as formerly He trod
Paradise, His presence fills
Our earth, each only as God wills
Can work — God's puppets, best and worst,
Are we; there is no last nor first.

"Say not 'a small event!' Why 'small'?
Costs it more pain that this, ye call
A 'great event,' should come to pass
Than that? Untwine me from the mass
Of deeds which make up life, one deed
Power shall fall short in, or exceed!"

Robert Browning (Song in "Pippa Passes").

THE members of the B. B. Society were to attempt a very daring thing. They had acted "The Princess," and now some one had proposed "Pippa Passes." It had been pronounced impossible at first; but a few eager spirits had carried the day, and careless, sunny Grace Fay had been chosen for Pippa.

Grace had printed the New Year's hymn on a little card, and put it in the frame of her toilet-glass, where she would often be reminded of it. She was standing before it one day, repeating the lines, when Cousin Ruth came in. Cousin Ruth was queer, the girls said; she did not care a fig for a new hat, and she liked to do the oddest things, — such as going to chapel for the Friday service; but she was so kind and helpful that they all liked her; and Grace, seeing her reflection in the glass, said, without turning, —

"You're the very one I want to see. I'm trying to make my own costume for Pippa, and I wish you would help me about the sleeves. You always know how everything ought to go. I think we shall make lots of money for the fund. The girls say there will be a great demand for tickets. It's such a nice way to do good, and I take comfort already in thinking of the poor things who will get a breath of country air. Our missionary told us last Sunday of many hundreds who were sent last summer, and of how much good it did them, and there were hundreds more who could n't go. But I almost wish I did n't have this part, for it 's very hard to learn."

"What is that in your glass?" asked Ruth at the first break.

"Oh, that 's Pippa's New Year's hymn, — and very difficult it is, too. I don't exactly understand it. I suppose you know just the meaning."

"It reminds me of the old lines of George Herbert," said Ruth, quietly: —

"'Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine.'

It is a beautiful thought that everything we do, however small, may be a service for Him."

"I like to think I am doing something, too," said Grace, warmly; "and I am really glad we thought of this play and that I can help."

Just then the door was pushed open, and little Ben rushed in.

"Oh, sister!" he cried, "won't you fasten these bobs on my kite right away? I've tried and tried, and they won't stay. There 's a jolly breeze now. Do hurry; the fellows are waiting."

"Why, Ben, how thoughtless you are!" said Grace. "Don't you see that Cousin Ruth is here, and that we are busy? It will take every minute of the afternoon to fix my dress, and your kite can just as well wait. Run away, there 's a good boy, and I will do it some other time."

"But there won't be such a breeze some other time, and you are always busy," said the little fellow, mournfully.

Cousin Ruth glanced at the card an instant, and then said pleasantly, —

"Wait, Ben; I have time to do it for you, while sister is laying out her costume. It will only take a minute."

Ben returned gladly, and when the work was done, said, by way of thanks, —

"You 're a brick!"

"Why did you look towards my hymn?" asked Grace, when he was gone. "You don't suppose mending kites can be a service?"

"I suppose," answered Ruth, with her queer, far-away look, "that a kite is as great a thing as a cup of cold water, and we know who promised a blessing on that."

"It will be a dreadful bother to keep all Ben's kites and balls in order," said Grace, slowly.

They were in the midst of cutting and fitting, when Ruth said, —

"Why, how the baby cries! Is he sick?"

"Yes, he 's teething," answered Grace; "and he 's been crying like that all day, and nurse has to carry him. I should think her arms would drop off. She has a sick headache, too, and mother is in the country for the week."

"Poor thing!" said Ruth; "I wish I 'd known that before;" and she hurried out of the room so quickly that Grace had no time to expostulate.

The next moment Ruth was walking up and down the nursery, trying to soothe the child with a quiet song, and nurse was upstairs ready to rest.

"Oh, dear," sighed Grace; "Ruth 's gone, and the sleeves are not finished yet. I suppose I ought to have done what she is doing; but I never once thought of it."

In an hour Ruth came back, looking uncommonly happy.

"Baby has dropped asleep," she said, "and I see it is time for me to run home now; but I will come over early to-morrow and finish the dress."

"You 're a good girl, Ruth," said her cousin affectionately, "and I really wish I could think of things as you do. You seem to enjoy it, too. I *do* mean to try to do some service, too."

"Don't forget that all service ranks the same, and the little things are the hardest to do," repeated Ruth, as she took her leave.

"I think I've made a beginning," said Grace the next day. "That tiresome old Mrs. Nye called this morning, and as mamma was not at home she asked to see me. I felt it a bore, I assure you; and I was just going to say I was too busy, when I saw the hymn, and thought of you. I went down, and I am glad I did, for the poor thing seemed quite gratified at seeing me, and invoked so many blessings on my head that I ought to be blessed indeed."

"You will reap blessings every day that you live and act from the highest motives," said Ruth, "and will bless others."

"If I only could think in time," mused Grace. "I am dreadfully thoughtless."

"I must give you a reminder," said Ruth. "When is your eighteenth birthday?"

"Next week, Wednesday. I suppose the reminder will come then."

"Yes," was the reply.

"I believe it 's one of Ruth's illuminated texts," Grace said on her birthday morning, when a large package arrived; "and it 's from Pippa's hymn, too," she added, as these words came to view in blue and gold: —

"All service ranks the same with God."

"OUR MARGARET."

BY MRS. ABBIE M. GANNETT.

I REMEMBER once going through a rough field all grown over with Roman wormwood, pigweed, and wild mustard, and thinking how unpleasant and useless it was, when suddenly I saw smiling at me a tall, beautiful golden-rod. Some kind wind had wafted its seed here, and now I thought, "Next year the seeds it is bearing will make a bright place hereabouts; and who knows but that in a few years all the field will be gay with golden blossoms, and the weeds will have entirely disappeared?"

Thoughts like these we sometimes have as we pass down some forlorn city street. The evil or frowning faces, untidy garments, harsh words, — how they suggest the weeds in the rough field! But the eye is attracted by one patient, thoughtful face, very different from the others; and the heart whispers, "Who can tell what growth of goodness may arise here because of this flower among the weeds?"

There once lived in a very common part of a great city a little girl named Margaret, as unlike those she lived with as the golden-rod was unlike the wormwood or wild mustard. Her features were not pretty, yet her face told of a good and earnest soul. She had no chances for learning in the schools; but she kept her bright eyes opened wide, and she learned much that came in time to be nearly as valuable to her as what we call "education." At any rate, she learned to see the necessities of many, and to wish eagerly to help the poor and the unfortunate; also to decide that she would help them when she grew up.

She was full of busy ways while still a girl; and when she grew to be a woman these enlarged into what we call capacity, so that she was able to undertake a business which she carried on as successfully as any man. She could neither read nor write, and all her business contracts bore only her +; but it is said she had so perfect a memory that she never forgot any of the details of her business, and consequently was never a loser through want of the ordinary knowledge.

She had a large bakery, with many persons employed, but she herself superintended it. She would not trust this to any other hands than her own. From the first it was understood that Margaret wanted to help those who needed help, and so it will readily be understood that such people were not slow in seeking her. From all parts of the city they came, and it is said that she never turned one away. She was a Catholic, but a most liberal one, surely, since it made no difference to her what religion one appealing to her professed.

She was especially tender to children, and would seek out subjects for her loving charity; and nothing gave her greater happiness than to relieve the suffering "little ones." "Our Margaret" she came to be called by those who received her bounty; and by-and-by, both far and near, she was known by that title alone. People talked of "Our Margaret" who did not know her last name and but a little of her history. It was enough that she had a loving, generous heart, and would help them or some they knew who sorely needed aid. "Go to 'Our Margaret,'" was the advice given to the destitute or ailing; and I must believe this was the advice given to even the sinful.

No one can say how much good this noble heart, first set in rough places, did in the world, — in money, in sympathy, in encouragement, and in causing people to believe there is disinterested kindness and love, after all.

Her business was so flourishing that she made large sums for several years; yet when she died very little was left to tell of her enterprise. Her money had all been used in her good works.

She was as modest as she was good. She could not bear to have her charity talked about or written about in the papers. Out of respect for her wishes not much was told of her outside of the city where she lived. But after she died the people there did not like to think that such a noble life should not be commemorated in some way; so they erected a statue in her honor. It is the figure of a plain-featured woman in a common dress, holding lovingly in her arms a little child. Its only inscription is "Our Margaret."

THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL.

BY CHARITY DYE

"Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb and know it not."

WE remember from our study of "The Holy Grail" that "for fear one good custom should corrupt the world," the "Round Table" was dissolved. With it the old order passed away.

"The Vision of Sir Launfal" and "The Holy Grail" are based upon the same myth; and while the "Vision" forms a counterpart to the "Grail," it represents an entirely new order. Lowell has been no less successful in embodying the modern spirit in this poem than has Tennyson in embodying the mediæval spirit in the "Grail."

From its unsurpassed nature touches "The Vision of Sir Launfal" has been called by some "a landscape-poem;" but this feature, though so prominent, is subservient to the thought, and forms its setting rather than its aim.

Nature's teaching has been a great factor in forming the modern view of things. Her generous sunshine, bounteous hospitality, and flood of joyous life penetrating all existence shows her to be thoroughly democratic. This democratic spirit has been reflected in society and in a government based upon the idea that all men are created free and equal. This new world, "older than the old," is without castles and without caste, except it be a caste constituted by the manly virtues.

The leper comes to the front in this poem. The conquest of the knight here is to learn the leper's experience; having done this, he has learned the meaning of the brotherhood of man; that even the most loathsome one is not without the "divine spark," hidden though it be. To learn this needs no coat of mail, no journey into another country, nor even a knight. It may be learned by any one and at his own door.

The Grail, too, has an enlarged meaning. It is not now of necessity the traditional cup. A wooden bowl will suffice if its contents be given and taken in a divine spirit. Neither needs there longer be a formal time and place for the Holy Supper. It is now kept as often and kept indeed, —

"In whatso we share in another's need."

God looks at the heart of things.

The interest in this poem being centred in the two figures, — the knight and the leper, — makes it far simpler in detail than "The Holy Grail," where we have a whole company of knights and an ideal king for character study. It is the "auroral flashes," of which the poet speaks in the first prelude, that adds so much to its wonderful beauty.

Teachers' Department.

TWO LECTURE-TALKS ON TEACHING THE BIBLE.

BY REV. A. P. PEABODY, D.D.

(Given in Channing Hall Oct. 27 and Nov. 3, 1887. Abstracts made by Miss G. T. Jacobs from reports taken by Miss M. H. Munro.)

I. THE OLD TESTAMENT.

DR. PEABODY opened his talk by a suggestion in regard to the teacher's attitude toward the Bible itself; the spirit in which it was approached being of more importance than any prescribed method of instruction. Unless to one's thought the Old Testament contains the divine element it should not be taught at all. Because men have taught more with regard to it than they believe, the Old Testament has fallen into discredit with many. Only what one sincerely believes should be taught, and no personal doubts or cavils be allowed to enter into and disturb another's peace.

One of the chief characteristics of the Old Testament is that it shows the law of development of the physical world to be the law of the spiritual. While in morality it falls below that of the New Testament (if not, why did Christ come, if the old revelation was all that was needed?), yet it transcends everything else known in the old world teaching.

Whether Moses wrote the Pentateuch or whether it is a compilation of a later date, the theology and morality of his people, who were the only monotheists of that time, were in advance of all other nations; and without underrating the teachings of Brahma, Confucius, and others, the Decalogue may be said to stand unequalled as a code of morals. There is nothing more glorious in history than some of the laws laid down in Leviticus, transcending by far the practice of Christians in many ages. Where in some instances the Jews are charged with a low state of morality it will be found to have been an improvement on that of other nations. The polygamy practised by them does not appear recorded in Genesis, or in the later books, and is not at any time commended, while it is often mentioned disapprovingly. In Deuteronomy are to be found the first humane measures in reference to war. Slavery with the Jews was a humane institution, and with them is the first record of a fugitive-slave law, inasmuch as no escaped slave was suffered to be taken and returned to his master.

In these and other ways the Mosaic law shows an improvement on what was practised in the rest of the world. There were bad men among the Jews, but the moral tone of Judea was higher than that of Rome or Athens. From his knowledge of the history of those cities, Dr. Peabody thought that no twelve men could have been found among either Greeks or Romans fitted to be the apostles of the Lord.

In teaching the Old Testament point out the evidence of the hand of God in the affairs of the Jewish race. Show the ethical truths on which their national system was builded. Show that Christ came forth from a race prepared, by the gradual development of religious and moral truths, to give birth to Him who was the incarnation of these in human character.

Besides these grand general truths, the speaker advised teaching of details, placing value on committing to memory the words of the Prophets Isaiah, Habakkuk, and Micah, and of the Psalms. Teach a scholar also to notice that the Old Testament is the only record in which stories are told with a direct reference to the moral character of acts and actors. If the writings of Plutarch seem an exception, it will be found that he praises characters whom the writers of Kings or Chronicles would not. The Nehemiah of the Old Testament, though lacking some of the softening traits which Christianity would give, Dr. Peabody believed to be almost without exception the grandest character in history.

In closing, Dr. Peabody recommended Stanley's "Lectures on the Jewish Church" and Smith's Bible Dictionary as helpful aids to Old Testament teaching.

II. The New Testament.

In teaching the Gospels it is necessary to have faith in their authenticity. The so-called sacred books may be divided into three classes, — those about which there is no doubt, those about which there is some doubt, and those which have never been received by the Christian Church. To the first of these classes belong the Gospels. There are traces of all having been written by the persons whose names they bear. Matthew wrote his first in the Greek, again in the Hebrew; Mark's was written according to the record given by Peter; Luke's material came from Christ's followers, and John wrote in part to supply what the others had not given. Dr. Peabody said his own perfect confidence in the truth of these Gospels was shared by some of the greatest scholars of our time, — Tischendorf, Dr. Ezra Abbot, and Professor Norton.

A study of the New Testament exclusively by means of question-books was to be deprecated. The answer to a printed question is too often learned merely to be recited, and is not remembered save in connection with the question. Rather talk over the lessons with the scholars, familiarize them with the scenes and places mentioned, try and lodge the traits of Christ's spirit and character and the details of his life in their minds, where they may become fruitful in beautiful deeds. Teach the progress of his life in the hearts, spirits, and lives of the Apostles; show how they carried what he taught in their hearts, enabling them to bear insults, imprisonment, and even death by violence.

Outside the Gospels is found the history of the greatest man of the Christian race, Saint Paul, a life which it is necessary to study and one we shall love to trace. Paul was the second founder of the Church. Christianity was little else but an advanced Judaism, till Paul, with a mind trained by travel and wise in the books of the Hebrews, emancipated it from the thraldom of the Jews. He struggled long against the Judaizing influence of those who upheld the Mosaic law, and most of his Epistles were aimed at the Judaizing Christians. In arguing with them he uses many of their terms, and much language that was not used in addressing Christians who were not Jews. The speaker believed that the Evangelical doctrines came from Saint Paul misunderstood by this means. It is desirable that pupils should understand the character of the Epistles in this respect; for much with this clew will be made clear, which, without it, is confused.

The Epistles to Timothy and Titus merited special study, as also that of James, brother or step-brother of Jesus. The latter is to be admired for its ethical beauty; it is a whole directory of life, applying as well to the nineteenth century as to the age in which it was written. It is here we find the first advocacy of free churches.

There are many passages of marked beauty and eloquence in the Epistles, transcending anything in literature outside of Hebrew poetry. These are worthy of committal to memory by the pupil.

Dr. Peabody advised the reading of some life of Christ, as also of Saint Paul, in connection with the study of the New Testament, and recommended Farrar's Life of Christ and Conybeare's and Howson's Life of Saint Paul.

If your religion does not bring forth fruit in the life, all these things [reading the Bible, liking Sunday, and being fond of religious conversation] are as worthless in the sight of God as is the barren vine in the thought of the gardener.

God is with us. He is not far off. He "may be found." We may be far off: He is not. His presence is perpetual, universal. He abides and follows after; He remains and accompanies.

SUGGESTIONS TO SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS.

[This admirable table of "Suggestions" was prepared by Rev. E. A. Horton for the Sunday-School of the Second Church, Boston.]

I. Promptness and Regular Attendance are of great importance in securing the interest of a class, in maintaining order, and in giving the whole school a spirit of earnestness.

II. In case of enforced absence try to provide a substitute.

III. See that your scholars participate in the opening exercises attentively and seriously.

IV. Do not read from newspapers or story books, unless in rare cases, when you can illustrate and impress the regular lesson.

V. Make it a duty to call at the homes of your scholars, and become personally interested in them.

VI. Prepare your lesson as much as you can; but if circumstances prevent a satisfactory study of it, do not take up something else, but keep to the assigned topic and do the best you can.

VII. Draw out the scholars; make them talk and question; and then bring the whole conversation back to the central subject. Do not leave the lesson in fragments, with no application.

VIII. Always take a hopeful view of your work, for that is the true one. The good results are of a kind very obscure in many cases, but none the less real.

IX. Therefore, be not hasty to resign; remember that length of service counts a great deal in the skill attained, and in the strength of ties formed.

X. Strive to make the Sunday-school cheerful and bright. Religion is no better for being gloomy, or instruction wiser because dull.

XI. Do not discriminate by favor among your pupils.

XII. Magnify your office; in other words, remember that you are privileged to assist in moulding coming character.

Opening and closing exercises are no small part of the influences which go to make up the power of a Sunday-school as a whole. The first five minutes of a Sunday-school ordinarily decide the impressions of the Sunday-school session for the day; and the last five minutes of a Sunday-school ordinarily decide the impressions which are to be taken away from the Sunday-school for the day. It behooves the superintendent, therefore, to consider well what is said, and how it is said, at the beginning, and what is said, and how it is said, at the close of every session of his Sunday-school.

In just that very place of His
Where He hath put and keepeth you,
God hath no other thing to do.

Be yourself *to* yourself. Live your life, and be honest with it.

The Editor's Study.

The approach of 1888 is heralded by the appearance, "thick as autumnal leaves," of new calendars with appropriate quotations for daily reading. The "Whitney Calendar," published by Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., will interest every reader of Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney's books; and there must be a large number of such readers in all our Sunday-schools.

The same publishers have just issued one of the daintiest volumes for little folks that we have seen for a long time. This is Mrs. Whitney's "Bird Talk: A Calendar of the Orchard and Wildwood." For each month of the year there is a carol by some one of the singing birds that may then be heard in the woods and fields.

All the songs are in simple verse and tell in pleasing style the varying chapters of Nature's changing scenery. The book is handsomely printed and tastefully illustrated, and is just the volume from which the teacher or mother may read aloud to children, who will listen with delight.

From the author and publisher, Mr. George May Powell, of Philadelphia, we have received a new "Illustrated Radial Key-Map of Palestine." The map is 48 × 36 inches in size, printed on paper of firm texture with a tinted ground, on which the lines, names, and natural features of the country are printed in large, clear type, in black, red, and blue. There is no crowding of numerous details, only a display of the principal points which the student cares to know about. It covers the region from Sidon and Damascus on the north to Beersheba and Edom on the south, and from the Mediterranean to Perea. This map seems to us to be in many respects the best general map of Palestine that has yet been published. Excellent engravings of Sychar, Bethany, and the source of the Jordan are given in three of the corner spaces, and there are also smaller maps showing the world of Old Testament times, the empire over which Paul journeyed, and the walls and buildings of Jerusalem. The price is $1.00, and the map may be seen and purchased at the rooms of the Unitarian Sunday-School Society, 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL INTELLIGENCE.

The "Willing Workers," a club composed of the four little girls of Mrs. Jackson's class in the Harrison Square Unitarian Sunday-school, held a successful fair on Saturday afternoon, November 12, realizing $35.00, which is to be devoted to the New Year's tree of the Boston Young Men's Christian Union. Mr. Baldwin must be glad to find such active assistants in a good cause.

The Lecture-talks which Mrs. Kate Gannett Wells has been giving, with blackboard illustrations, in Channing Hall, have been exceedingly interesting and helpful to the many teachers who have attended them. A large proportion of Mrs. Wells' audiences have listened with pencil in hand and have taken notes of her numerous, and always apt illustrations and suggestive comments on the lesson topic.

Rev. C. F. Dole, who is now giving a series of four "Talks" in the Channing Hall course, is the author of two of our most useful Sunday-school Manuals, — "The Citizen and Neighbor" and "Early Hebrew Stories." His present course is on the early books of the Hebrew Scriptures; and all teachers and students of the Old Testament will be helped by his criticism and exposition.

At the second meeting of the Unitarian Sunday-school Union, held November 21, the very practical question of "Charitable Work for Sunday-schools" was considered. An interesting and valuable paper on this subject was read by Mr. E. A. Whitman, of Cambridge, and a good discussion followed. We hope to give in our next paper a more extended report of the meeting.

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